THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (c) The Ministry of Water Resources approved the Scheme for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of 32 water bodies in Beed district of Maharashtra under the pilot scheme *viz.* National Project for Repair, Renovation and Restoration of Water Bodies directly linked to agricultre.

Assistance under AIBP for Sardar Sarovar Project

.4302. SHRI VIJAYKUMAR RUPANI: Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) how much assistance under Accelerated Irrigation Benefit Programme (AIBP) for Sardar Sarovar Project was allocated to the State Government of Gujarat for the years 2006-07 and 2007-08;

(b) whether it is a fact that sum of Rs. 644 crores has not been released to the State Government of Gujarat, so far;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when this amount will be released?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SHRI JAI PRAKASH NARAYAN YADAV): (a) to (d) The Central Assistance released to Sardar Sarovar Project during 2006-07 and 2007-08 was Rs. 121.8885 crore and Rs. 585.72 crore respectively. For the year 2007-08, the 1st instalment of grant recommended under AIBP for the project was of Rs. 675.20 crore of which, Rs. 423.30 crore was released during 2007-08 and balance amount of Rs. 251.90 crore has been relased on 10th April, 2008.

Problems of Haj Pilgrims

4303. SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) what additional arrangements are being made by Air India to ensure that the Haj pilgrims do not face problems during the forthcoming Haj which they faced during the last pilgrimage;

(b) the details of the complaints received till date from various quarters in respect of Haj Pilgrimage;

(c) the details of the complaints pending at present; and

(d) by when all the complaints are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) As the capacity available with Air India is fully committed to the schedule operations and leased aircrafts of the appropriate type are not easily available, an offer has been made to Saudi Arabian Airlines to transport larger number of pilgrims during Haj 2008. Further, steps are being taken to streamline the system of carriage of personal baggage and Zam Zam water during Haj 2008.

(b) to (d) Complaints have been received from individual Pilgrims, State Haj Committee, Central Haj Committee and from individuals and organisations representing Haj pilgrims. The complaints mostly pertain to (i) Late receipt of baggage; (ii) Non-delivery of baggage;

(iii) Z.am Zam water not being provided to the pilgrims; (iv) Handling of passengers; and (v) Delays of flights. All complaints received are examined and the suggestions made therein are evaluated with a view to streamlining the forthcoming Haj operations for the benefit: of the pilgrims. Most of the complaints pertaining to baggage delivery and Zam Zam water have already been addressed.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED AND UNSTARRED QUESTIONS SET FOR 5TH MAY, 2008@

Reform agenda in higher education

*541. SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI:
SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to the plan approved by the Union Cabinet, the Planning Commission is setting up Inter-Ministerial Working Group to work out the finer details of the reform agenda in higher education;

(b) whether all Central assistance would be linked with implementation of strong reform, aimed at restructuring higher education;

(c) if so. whether this working Group has already submitted its recommendations;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) by when a final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (e) In the Eleventh Plan document, the Planning Commission has, *inter-alia,* suggested that an Inter-Ministerial Group should be set up to work out a detailed reforms agenda in higher education. While no such Group has been constituted, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has initiated steps for academic reforms in higher education by addressing all the universities to urgently take up various reforms including the examination reforms doing away with annual examination by introducing semester system with continuous internal assessment, introduction of credit-based courses, regular curricula revision, credit accumulation and credit transfer system to permit mobility of students. As of now, grant of central assistance is not linked to reforms.

A Review Committee comprising eminent academics and Government representatives from Planning Commission, Finance and the Human Resource Development Ministries, has been set up to review the role of University Grants Commission and the All India Council for Technical Education, in the context of changes in higher, professional and technical education in the country and demands of a knowledge economy.

Indians employed in US

*542. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to refer to answer to Starred Question 142, given in the Rajya Sabha on the 10th March, 2008 and state:

(a) the source from where the figures that twelve per cent of the scientists, thirty-eight per

@The silling of the Rajya Sabha on Monday, the 5th May, 2008 was adjourned on account of passing away of Kumari Nirmala Despande, a sitting member. Answers to questions put down in the lists for that day were laid on the Table of the House on Tuesday, the 6th May, 2008.